

STAR REACH™

INSTRUCTION MANUAL

Interplay™

STAR REACH™

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Twenty Years Ago . . .

"Deactivate light drive," ordered the captain, standing near the helm.

"Deactivated." answered the crewman in a flat voice.

"Engage main engines," ordered the captain.

"Main engines engaged," reported the helmsman.

The great starship shuddered as it settled back into normal space. Stars suddenly winked into view, invisible until the ship had slowed to less than light speed.

"Contact with Station R101, sir," reported the communications officer. "I have their wavelength."

"Switch on tractor beacon," ordered the captain.

Another helmsman reached arms across a broad panel filled with lights, and flipped a series of switches. "Tractor beacons on," he answered.

Standing aside from the deck officers was a civilian, a man dressed in the purple robes of an Imperial Grand Ambassador. This man, Gelt Heartty, watched coolly as the efficient crew went through their motions, the cool, calm commander issuing orders tonelessly. Gelt felt the almost imperceptible jolt of the tractor beam locking onto the great ship, capturing it, drawing it toward the distant space station still visible as no more than a bright, distant speck on the huge overhead viewscreen.

Gelt's mind was on the upcoming meeting with delegates from the six other worlds; disaster loomed on the horizon. A renegade ship of the Cynod Legion had attacked and destroyed a Xanbari freighter, killing all on board. Tensions had risen. The Cynod Legion claimed to have captured and executed the renegade offenders but the Xanbari demanded more in the way of compensation. Open warfare threatened to destroy the slender agreement made many years ago.

This was to be only the second meeting of this Great Council, a council first formed barely a decade ago when representatives of all the known civilizations had met together for the first time. The huge space station that was now their destination had been built specifically for that purpose, a place where delegates could meet, learn from each other, and hopefully find common interests.

Gelt's race, after exploring their own solar system for nearly a century, had twenty years ago developed a way of achieving speeds greater than light, a breakthrough that promised to open the rest of the galaxy and beyond to exploration and possible colonization.

It was the third interstellar expedition from Gelt's planet that first discovered evidence of other civilizations in our universe. A Kathodian ship was spotted, radio contact attempted, and a signal raised. A historic moment, it proved to be the first contact between two alien races.

Others were soon encountered: the cold and calculating Xanbari; the savage, militant Cynod Legion; the reptilian, desert loving Solonates; the machine race calling themselves the Braquellians;

and the mysterious race of gaseous creatures whose name could best be pronounced by Gelt's people as "Z'nnl." All were different, but all had evolved much the same way, at nearly the same pace. Most remarkably they had all, near simultaneously, developed a drive system allowing them to exceed the speed of light.

First contacts led to early disagreements. It seemed that all the races had plans to colonize and develop the universe. All wished to expand their realms. Realizing that a peaceful cooperation was in the best interests of all those involved, a first meeting of the races was planned, and a special space station constructed for that purpose.

Much had been learned at those first meetings, of commonalities, and of differences. Kaglren, then the spokesmen for the Children of Kathod, the squidheaded philosophers from a planet nearly covered by water, had preached hard for peace and cooperation. The Cynod Legion, its apelike warriors dressed in barbaric custom, made numerous objections. The Xanbari, preying mantis-like, listened carefully but spoke little. Gelt's people had sided with the Kathodians, both asking for a fair and equal division of the universe. But this position was disputed by the ambassador of the Solonates, the lizardlike creatures that had evolved on their desert world. The Solonates were slow breeders and wanted all the deserts of the universe for the procreation of their race. The representative of the Z'nnl gaseous creatures without permanent form was the most unfathomable, the wants and needs of his people apparently so alien as to be inexplicable to more material minds. The machine Braquellians' plans and dreams seemed particularly uninspired.

But a consensus had been reached, and rules were drafted governing the expansion and growth of the races. Rules that would quickly be broken.

The great ship drew nearer the space station, now visible in the viewscreen. A great seven-sided wheel drifting through space, a thing that some hoped would become a symbol of universal peace.

"Throttle engines," came the command. The space station now loomed gigantically on the view screen. Forms could be seen moving about the windows and ports of the station.

Gelt was joined by his assistant, Jandar Kohn, a pretty young woman, daughter of Gelt's former superior.

"Good afternoon," Gelt smiled.

"Good day, ambassador. I bring word from the home council. There is a rumor that the Cynods are planning to attack the station."

"A good rumor," Gelt answered, "but undoubtedly planted by one of the other members. It is a business much like that. What seems obvious is usually not." Gelt had been in the diplomatic services for many years. He had learned much about 'truth.'

The ship jolted as it locked into the station. At the helm the captain began giving orders and crewmen began the operation of shutting down the great ship.

"Come," said Gelt. "We are late. The other council members await our arrival."

Taking her arm, the two delegates left the helm of the ship and entered the station.

Inside, Jandar was taken aback by the strange looking interior.

"Xanbari technology," Gelt explained, sensing her awe. "They use organic methods to 'grow' tubing, conduit, and other materials."

"It's so odd," said Jandar, reaching out her hand to touch the horny surface of a nearby pipe. "It almost feels alive."

"It is," said Gelt. "Much of it is anyway. Our people provided other parts of the station technology, as did most of the other races. Only the Cynod contributed but a little to its construction. But, of course, you know that they are a race of slave owners."

As the pair drew nearer the council chambers, a door slid up revealing the vast room beyond. Seated around the great table were the other six members of the great council, their attachés standing behind them. Gelt took his seat at the table. Jandar stood behind him.

"Please excuse my tardiness," he spoke. "We were unfortunately delayed en route. May we begin?"

The Solonate delegate rose slowly from his seat, placing his scaled hands on the table in front of him. Flicking his lizard head back and forth, he scanned the faces of the other delegates. His dewlap shook as he moved.

"Fellow delegates," he began, his hissing, rattling speech automatically translated by computer and pumped to each delegate's seat in the proper language.

“We have been called together in an emergency session in an effort to solve a dispute arisen between two member nations. We will attempt to solve this amiably, and without bloodshed.”

None of the other delegates spoke. The mechanical Braquellian seated next to the Solonate whirred softly, its single red eye scanning smoothly back and forth. Machine intelligence, it was impossible for the others to tell if it was thinking or merely ‘idling,’ waiting for the Solonate to go on.

“The Xanbari claimed, falsely I might add,” said the Solonate, “that they have been attacked without reason by members of the Cynod Legion.”

“Objection,” buzzed the Xanbari, flatly, without emotion. “My people were destroyed in an unprovoked attack upon their ship. Thousands of lives were lost, and tens of thousands of young larvae. We demand redress.”

“Trespassers!” Shouted the Cynod Legionnaire, on his feet, pounding the table with his fist. “They were in our territory.”

Gelt signalled subtly and Jandar leaned forward so he could whisper in her ear. “The Solonates have reached some sort of treaty with the Cynod Legion. Or so it has been rumored. The destroyed Xanbari ship was believed headed for a desert planet the Solonates desire. Obviously, they have taken sides against the insects. Keep a sharp eye on our apelike friend bellowing over there.”

Jandar nodded, then straightened back up. The Legionnaire was still talking.

“We are the ones demanding redress!” shouted the Legionnaire, spittle flying from his lips. “We are the wronged party in this dispute.”

“Peace, fellows, peace,” came the plea from the squidlike Kathodian ensconced in his tank of water. His body still immersed, he had lifted his head above the surface in order to speak. The tentacles of his face wriggled as he spoke.

“We must all realize that there is a place for all of us in this universe. Certainly, with all the worlds given to us by Kathod the Great, there must be room for all of us.”

“He is right,” said Gelt, standing up from his seat. “There is no reason for war. My people spent the greater part of their evolution at war, and to what end?”

“To become great! To become warriors!” shouted the Legionnaire. “As it was told by our forefathers, those who saw the great fire in the sky and learned the truth.”

The Cynod Legionnaire referred to an ancient myth of his people, of a fire god who came to them long ago, teaching them the ways of war.

“Your god is our god, as well,” answered Gelt. “You know we all share the same myth in one form or another; this is known to all of us though not all choose to interpret it as you do, Legionnaire.”

“But yours is the god of fools! Of weaklings! Your fathers, I’m afraid, did not listen closely enough.”

“The teachings of Kathod inform us,” began the squid, “that conflicts may be settled in many ways. Violence is only one of these ways. And conflict we do not want.”

“But the Xanbari are transgressors in territories not belonging to them,” spoke the Solonate, still pressing his point. “That part of the universe belongs to the Cynod Legion.”

“My people were forced to move by holocaust conditions on their own planet,” said the Xanbari, his tone still flat, without emotion.

“You had no reason to destroy them without contacting them.”

“Trespass is trespass. They violated the agreement and the penalty is death,” said the Legionnaire, thumping his fist on his chest for emphasis.

The room fell suddenly silent as, slowly, the gleaming, mechanical Braquellian rose from his seat. His computer brain having analyzed the data so far, he was about to state a position. The other delegates waited patiently.

“We Braquellians assert our right to independent status and the right to colonize and expand.”

The robot then stopped. The delegates waited to see if it would say anything else. It spoke no more but with a whirring of gears, sat slowly back down.

“And so speaks the wisdom of technology,” chided the Legionnaire.

The Braquellians statement was exactly the same as that made at the first great council meeting twenty years ago. Like then, no one at the table was sure what the robots wanted. Unsavory rumors of what they had done to the organic race that invented them had circulated for years. Apparently twenty years of processing the data had not changed the conclusion the Braquellians had always stood by.

“We thank our esteemed Braquellian colleague for his comments,” said Gelt, diplomatically. “I am sure that we can all benefit from the wisdom of your race’s teachings.”

The robot sat silently, unmoving. Gelt turned his attention elsewhere.

“Solonate,” he said. “Is it not true that you yourself desire the desert planet for your own species.”

The Solonate wagged his head angrily and the dewlap under his chin expanded briefly, turning bright scarlet.

“No... well, yes. It is well known that my people are slow to breed and expand, and that we need certain conditions in order to maximize our growth.”

The Solonate hesitated, then began again.

“Are you, by chance, accusing us of ulterior motives?” the Solonate asked.

“Yes. We are.” said the Xanbari, flatly.

“I was speaking to the delegate Gelt! Not a filthy bug!”

“But we all have our ulterior motives, do we not?” interjected the floating Kathodian. “We must all understand that our own goals and objectives are most important only to us, and others are much the same way.”

Just then the Z'nnl, up till now silent and almost unnoticed, began expanding in it's seat, moving about. An orifice formed amidst the swirling cloud.

“My people wish only to be left alone,” it said, floating up and out of its seat. “We desire our freedom, our will, and will sustain no doubt against us, for us, or with us—at any time.”

The rest of the delegates blinked, scowling at the words of the Z'nnl, trying to understand the creature's meaning (save only the Braquellian). As was often the case, no one could make much sense of the Z'nnl's statements. No one could be sure if it was a failure of the translator, or the result of the Z'nnl's very alien composition. It went on:

“Furthermore, I speak for all of us when I speak above my chair. And over my chair, as well.”

The Z'nnl had by now floated over the table and taken up a position in the center of the room, floating above the table's surface, looming down over the Legionnaire.

“Talk sense,” demanded the Cynod, looking up at the gas creature. “You talk nothing but wind!” And he waved at the Z'nnl as though to push it away.

It is unclear exactly what happened next but the Z'nnl, apparently startled, tried to move back quickly, in the process expelling a cloud of foul smelling gas that enveloped the Legionnaire and his aide. The aide, startled and thinking his delegate was under attack, yanked forth a laser pistol and sent a shot dead center into the retreating Z'nnl. The beam passed straight through the insubstantial creature and struck the Solonate delegate square in the head. The lizard creature fell over the table, dead, smoke curl-

ing up from the furrow burned in the crown of its skull. The Solonate aide, seeing his delegate dead, returned fire, wounding the Cynod Legionnaire in the shoulder, but missing the armed aide behind. Meanwhile, the Xanbari bodyguard, assuming that they were the target of an assassination attempt, opened fire.

“Get down,” screamed Jandar, grabbing Gelt by the shoulders and throwing him to the floor under the table. “All hell’s breaking loose.”

Amidst the shouts and scorching bolts of light, the two made for the door, ducking and crawling low. Jandar took a bolt in the left calf that burned away a good inch of flesh, but she managed to get Gelt safely out of the room.

Behind them, chaos reigned in the council chambers as the fire fight continued. The translating machinery had been damaged and the delegates’ voices, untranslated, screamed, hissed, and buzzed in tongues unknown to one another.

There was an explosion, and Gelt and Jandar were knocked heavily to the deck.

An insect arm, mansized, blown out of the council chambers by the blast, fell on the floor in front of them, yellow ichor oozing from its cracked and broken exoskeleton. It twitched spasmodically as Gelt and Jandar staggered back to their feet and started down the passageway.

Gelt’s arm was bathed in blood. Shrapnel had struck his shoulder but he could walk. Jandar was staggering heavily, the loss of blood and shock from the wound starting to take its toll.

“We must get back to the ship,” Jandar said, now leaning on Gelt for support. “This station’s losing integrity.”

Deep rumblings could be felt rolling through the station’s framework. Something had been damaged and was now giving way inside. There was no telling how much time they had.

One of the Z’nul either the delegate or his aide, Gelt could not tell which; passed by and over them. Cold, clammy, and very alien, the thing nearly enveloped them as it raced by before turning down a side corridor and disappearing.

“How many of us you think survived,” Gelt asked Jandar, helping her along.

“I didn’t see,” she panted back. “But not many, judging from the size of the blast.”

“We must reach the ship and get word back to earth. This is the end of any hope of cooperation, I’m afraid. There will be war, and a terrible one. People must know, and begin preparing.”

Something grabbed Gelt by his wounded shoulder and spun him around, throwing him against the bulkhead.

“Ta ood, darely soo vlachem!”

It was the wounded Cynod Legionnaire. He grinned at Gelt, terribly, then fired a bolt of laser light square into the Ambassador’s face. Gelt’s corpse fell heavily to the deck.

The Legionnaire turned next on Jandar but he was too slow. Her piece already out, her blast caught the murderer in the neck, nearly taking the Legionnaire’s head off. The ape creature fell over backward, dead.

Groaning, Jandar pulled herself to her feet and limped down the corridor, supporting herself against the wall.

“Damn,” she hissed under her breath, fighting the pain as she staggered along. She must reach the ship and get word back to her home.

The airlock was still open when she reached the ship. Beyond, inside the ship she saw crewmen and officers running in all directions. Somewhere a siren was sounding.

“What’s wrong?” asked Jandar, grabbing a crewman by the shoulder and turning him around.

“The ship is locked to the station,” he answered tensely.

“Something’s gone wrong and we can’t get free. We’re preparing emergency escape pods now.”

The ship was suddenly rocked by an explosion sounding from somewhere deep inside the space station. Jandar lurched forward, caught herself on the panel. The crewman she had been questioning raced off, soon lost in the panic seizing the ship.

“Every man for themselves,” she told herself, grimly.

Her leg still injured and untreated, she began staggering through the ship, down the long corridors to the eight escape pod bays. Five of the ships had already been launched; the remaining three were being readied. Jandar managed to find her way on board.

While the crew readied the pod for ejection, Jandar removed the communications officer from his post, and took over the board. She must get word back to her home.

Even as the crew made the last preparations for ejection, Jandar was getting out her message. It might be weeks or months before a space folding ship intercepted the message, but it was the best she could do.

“Emergency,” she said. “Emergency. Council meeting has failed. No agreement reached. Ambassador Heartty dead...”

Another great shudder passed through the ship as an explosion rolled through the space station.

“Prepare for ejection!” shouted an officer. Jandar heard the locks snapping closed. The pod would be ejected by old fashioned explosives.

“Prepare for hostilities,” she continued, getting out the warning. “All races potentially hostile.”

“Eject!” shouted the young officer. With a loud “bang!” the pod blasted free of the ship.

“We have abandoned ship,” continued Jandar, looking out the small quartz port back toward the abandoned spacecraft and the now burning space station. “Coordinates Cygnus Alpha 11078.2. Have successfully ejected. Require rescue.”

“Pod clear!” came the call.

Jandar watched transfixed as the slowly revolving station continued to burn. Deep within its bowels she saw a glow, burning brighter than the rest of the station.

“Cancel rescue operation,” Jandar said flatly into the communicator. The space station was glowing brighter. The center of it a white incandescence almost too bright to look at.

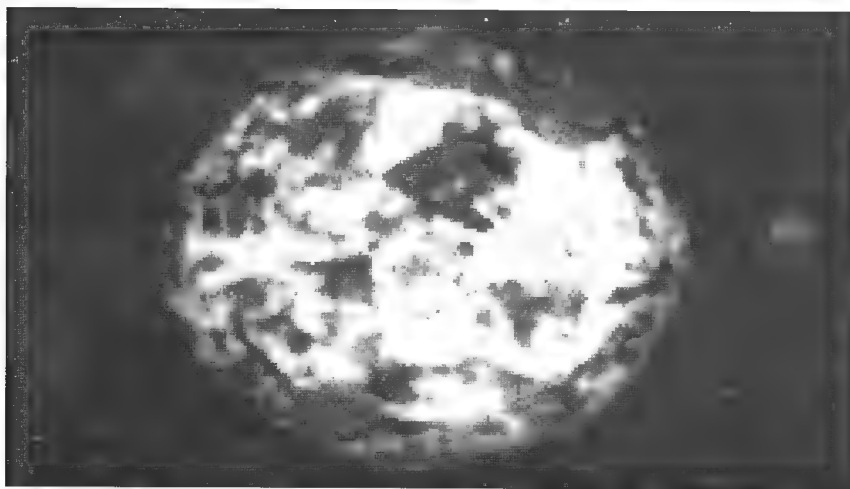
“I repeat,” said Jandar. “Cancel rescue mission. Catastrophic disaster.”

The entire space station went suddenly dark.

“No survivors,” said Jandar. “No survivors.”

The space station exploded in brilliance beyond imagining, the heat incinerating everything around it for thousands of miles.

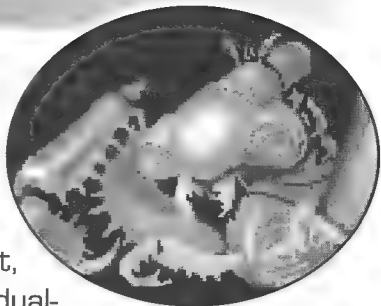
“Fire in the sky...” were the last intelligible words on Jandar’s emergency transmission.



WHAT WE KNOW OF THE ALIENS

THE XANBARI

This insectoid race hails from a distant quarter of the universe. Xanbari seem nearly devoid of emotion, speaking in flat, controlled voices. Other aliens contend the Xanbari are all part of one great, hive mind and that the concept of individualism is completely foreign to their way of thinking. They are practical and logical, and usually can be trusted to follow the law—to the letter! Although they show little in the way of aggressive tendencies, few doubt the Xanbari desire the whole universe for themselves.



THE CYNOD LEGION

The warrior race calling itself the Cynod Legion is mammalian, resembling a cross between a bear and a gorilla. Large males grow to nearly six feet in height, sometimes weighing as much as three hundred pounds. They are a race of warriors and slave-holders, an aristocratic military class currently served by two or three lesser races that have long been enslaved by the Legion, giving the legion faster production abilities.



The Cynod code of honor is a warrior's code. All achievements within this society are measured by success in combat. Individuals rise to positions of leadership by challenging those above them. Many of these combats are fought to the death.

KATHODIANS

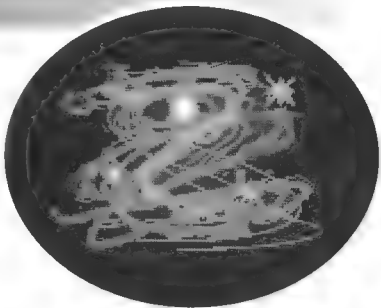
Kathodians are an aquatic race, evolved on a planet nearly completely covered by water. These peaceful creatures are a race of semi-religious philosophers who hold an ancient forefather named Kathod in divine reverence.



The Kathodians are not very aggressive, However, their philosophy also stresses the importance of the continuance of their race and the holy teachings of Kathod.

Z'NNL

The Z'nnl are a race of sentient gas creatures hailing from a distant nebula. They have no permanent shape, appearing as clouds of greenish-blue, roiling gas, somewhat iridescent.

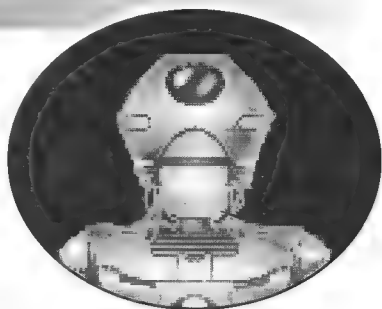


The Z'nnl are the most alien of races known to us, physiologically, as well as psychologically. Despite the best efforts of translating machines and programs, there has been only partial success understanding the wants and desires of this race. Their actions are unpredictable, their goals inscrutable.

THE BRAQUELLIANS

The Braquellians are a machine race: tall gleaming robots of various designs and styles. The Braquellians are straight-forward and logical beings.

The Braquellians claim to have been designed and built by an organic race that formerly inhabited their planet. Their legends say that this race was wiped out by plague, leaving the robots to carry on alone. Unsubstantiated rumors, however, claim that the machine race turned on their inventors, killing them in a single night of terror.



THE SOLONATES

The Solonates are desert dwellers. Lizard-like, they resemble a cross between a horned lizard and the beaded Gila monster of the American Southwest. They are compact creatures whose thick skin and low surface-area-to-volume ratios allow them to conserve water and avoid evaporation in arid climates.



THE HUMANS

The Humans were the last entrants into the fray for galactic domination. Although initially siding with the peaceful Kathodians, the Humans now contain quite an offensive arsenal. Using a well-balanced offense and defense, the Humans are now considered one of the favorites to control the galaxy.



Their biggest flaw, however, is their brash over-confidence which can lead them into battles they cannot win.

GETTING STARTED

Star Reach™ requires at least 2 MB of RAM. It also requires a 386 25MHz CPU or faster. It will take up about 8 MB of hard disk space when fully installed. The README file will contain exact RAM and hard disk requirements. If you have problems running this game or any questions about the above, please call our customer support line listed in the back of this manual.

GAME OBJECTIVES

Star Reach is a real-time strategy game in which you conquer the galaxy for your chosen race through resource management and strategic maneuvering.

Ultimate victory is achieved by satisfying the conditions listed in each scenario description. The goal for intermediate and advanced scenarios will be to destroy each of your enemies' headquarters. Beginner "training" missions may require you to build planetary populations to certain levels or establish food and mineral storages on varying planet types.

You will be eliminated from the game if you lose your own headquarters or if your HQ is destroyed.

INSTALLING STAR REACH™ To YOUR HARD DRIVE

1. Turn on your computer and proceed as necessary past any personal menu programs or other accessories until you reach the DOS prompt (normally, this is C:\ to reflect boot up from a hard drive).
2. Insert the original Disk One of Star Reach into your 3.5" floppy disk (this may be either A: or B:).
3. Shift to that drive by typing the letter from step 2 followed by a colon.
4. Type "INSTALL" and follow the on-screen prompts to load Star Reach onto your hard disk.
5. After installation is complete, you will be returned to the DOS prompt. By typing "README" at this point, you can access a text file which contains any last minute additions or revisions to the program which occurred after this manual went to print. Alternatively, if a hard copy of this information is desired, one may be generated via a standard "print" command from the DOS prompt.
6. When you are ready to play simply type "STAR" from the REACH subdirectory on your hard drive.

STARTING THE GAME

After typing "STAR" from the REACH subdirectory, title screens will appear followed by a brief introduction. When it is finished, you will arrive at the Main Options Screen. You can page through the introductory screens faster by pressing the ESCape key.

PLAYER CONTROLS

There are three levels of control in Star Reach™.

Level One - Opening menus and option screens

The OPENING MENUS are controlled by a robotic arm. Point the mechanical hand at the option you want to select with the mouse, joystick, or arrow keys. Press the left mouse button/joystick button or ENTER key to select when the index finger of the robotic hand points at the desired object. To move levers, first point at the lever and push and hold the selection button down while moving the lever to the desired position.

Level Two - Combat and ship movement

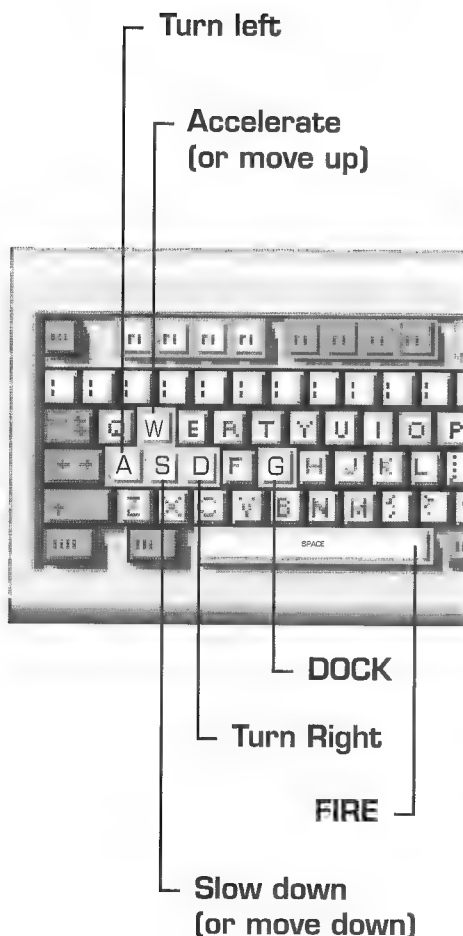
The COMBAT/MOVEMENT controls of your Star Cruiser are defined by joystick movements or keyboard keystrokes. On the keyboard, you can define keys for ship movement (see the Edit Keys section below) In addition to accelerations and turns, there is a DOCK button and a FIRE button. DOCK is used to dock on a planet while FIRE fires your Star Cruiser's weapon.

Level Three - Docking

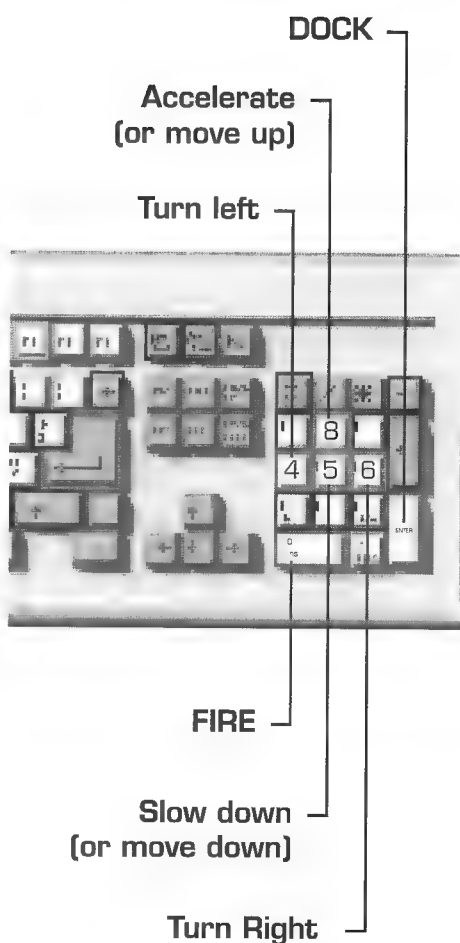
On the DOCKING screen, you may move through various options which are displayed as icons. You may select an option by pressing the DOCK key. To exit out of a menu (or out of the docking screen altogether) press the FIRE key.

THE DEFAULT KEYS ARE AS FOLLOWS

PLAYER 1



PLAYER 2

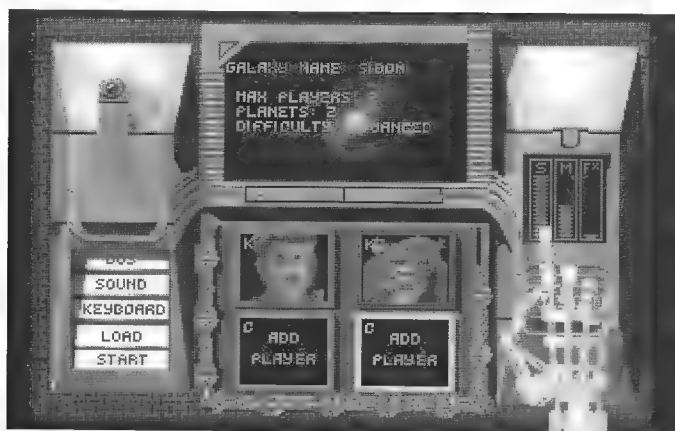


You can control other aspects of the game quickly with certain function keys, as defined below:

- ESC** - brings up game window (return to game, quit game, quit to Dos, recalibrate joystick)
- F1** - switch to one player screen.
- F2** - switch to split screen.
- F3** - decrease the music volume
- F4** - increase the music volume
- F5** - decrease the sound effects volume
- F6** - increase the sound effects volume
- F7** - decrease the volume of the speech
- F8** - increase the volume of the speech
- F10** - go to SAVE screen to save the game or EXIT the game.
- F11** - Toggle player one message screens to text/graphics
- F12** - Toggle player two message screens to text/graphics

For purposes of this manual, it will be assumed you are playing from the keyboard. If using a joystick, simply use BUTTON 1 when it asks you to press the FIRE button and use BUTTON 2 for DOCKING.

THE MAIN OPTIONS SCREEN



The Main Options Screen gives you access to additional options screens: Sound, Load game, Keyboard, Start the game, and you may also exit back to DOS (thus exiting the game).

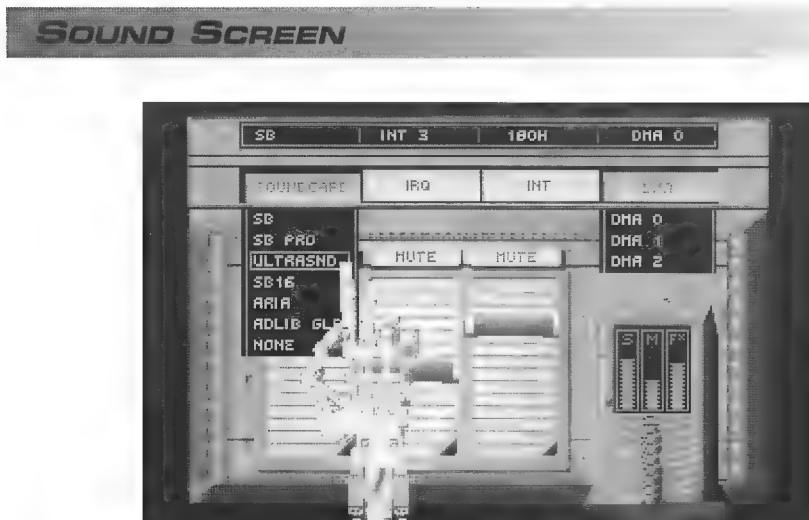
Additionally, you select the scenario you want to play from this menu and who will be participants in the action.

You can choose the scenario you wish to play by rotating through the various galaxies shown at the top of the screen. Each galaxy has different locations of planets and planet types. To find out more about each scenario, simply click on the displayed galaxy screen. (see "Scenario Preview" below).

Up to four alien races may compete in a scenario at a time. Pictures of the competing races will be displayed in the bottom half of the screen. Note that only two of the races can be controlled by human players. If fewer than four races are involved, the empty slots will not display a race and will show "Add Player." To change player information on competing players, click on the box of the player that you wish to change. (See "Player Select Screen").

When you are satisfied with all game options, select "START" and the game will begin. (Be prepared! The action starts right away and there is no time to waste!)

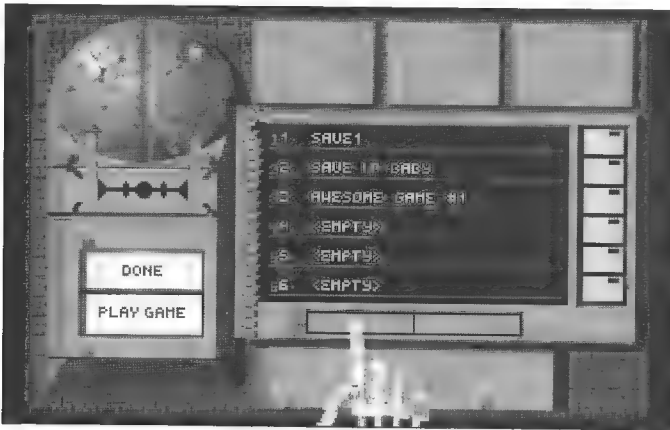
NOTE: When you select START, all options you have set will be saved, so that you will not have to set your desired options each time you play the game.



In this screen, use the robotic hands index finger to select options. The sound levels for music, sound effects, and speech can be adjusted by pointing to the appropriate handle, holding the pointer down, and dragging the handle to the desired level. Each of these sound levels may also be muted by selecting the mute button above the various levels. Sound levels are displayed in the right portion of the screen.

Star Reach™ will try to autosense your sound card for you. The values it autosenses will be set as your defaults. However, you can change these defaults by selecting the appropriate menu and item within.

LOAD GAME SCREEN



To load a game in progress, find the name of the game as you saved it and select the game by pushing the button adjacent to it. You can scroll up and down as necessary by clicking on the arrows underneath the list.

Selecting "Play Game" will load the game marked with a depressed button adjacent to it, if that game is valid. Selecting "Done" will return you to the main menu without loading a game.

PLAYER SELECT SCREEN



The player select screen allows you to choose which alien races will compete and how they will be controlled. Each alien race can be controlled by:

- KEYBOARD** 1 (using the keys defined for KEYBOARD 1)
- KEYBOARD** 2 (using the keys defined for KEYBOARD 2)
- JOYSTICK** 1 (if available)
- JOYSTICK** 2 (if available)
- COMPUTER** (the computer will play the designated alien race)

You can input your name (or that of the alien race) by clicking on the area beneath the picture and typing in a name. You can scroll through the various alien types by clicking on the arrows beneath the pictures. Once you have made your selections, select "DONE". If you want to leave that alien location blank (for two or three player games), select "CANCEL." You can also select "Normal Mode" or "Phantom Mode." (see page 36)

KEYBOARD



This screen will allow you to layout the keyboard controls for combat, ship movement, and docking. You can designate the keys you want to control the various aspects of the game. You can also take care of keyboard lockout problems by setting which keys have priorities if two are pressed at the same time. A keyboard is displayed with KEYBOARD ONE keys and KEYBOARD TWO keys highlighted in red and blue respectively. The current key settings are shown next to their function button on the bottom of the screen. To alter any of the keys, click the Edit Keyboard button and then click on the desired key for the function.

What is Keyboard Lockout and How Can I Avoid It?

Some computer keyboards can not handle certain keypress combinations simultaneously. This is known as keyboard lockout. Keyboard Lockout is important to test for two-player games or if you intend to use Keypress combinations. To find out if your keyboard contains "lockout", click on the "Test Lockout" button. At this point all of the active keys will be highlighted red. By pressing

down on all of the red keys, their highlight should turn to green. If the key's highlight remains red this key has locked out. For optimum performance try selecting different key combinations and retest for lockout. To exit the lockout test at any point press ESCAPE, the mouse button, or the joystick button. After the new keys have been selected, click "DONE" to return to the main menu and save the new key settings. Click "CANCEL" to return to the main menu without saving the settings. If at any point you wish to return to the original Star Reach™ key settings click the "DEFAULT" key.

SCENARIO PREVIEW



To preview a scenario before play begins, click on the scenario from the main options screen. A general overview map of the planets are presented in the large window. Note that in some of the advanced scenarios information is scarce and all of the planets may not be visible. Information such as planet names, number of factories and number of troops are available by clicking the appropriate button. To choose a different scenario click on the left or right button to cycle through the scenarios available. Once you are finished press **DONE** to return to the main options screen.

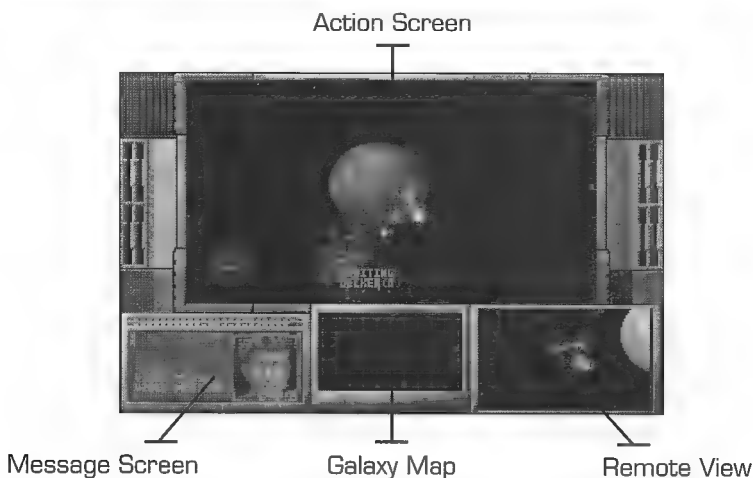
SAVING YOUR GAME

To save a game in progress, press the <F10> key during the game and a save game window will appear with open slots marked as <EMPTY> on the list. Selecting <EMPTY> will allow you to add a new saved game to the list. Selecting any other name on the list will overwrite that saved game with the same name. You will be given the option to change that name once selected as well. To exit without saving, simply press the <ESCAPE> key.



THE VIEW SCREEN

NORMAL MODE



The screen is divided into four sections: Action Screen, Message Screen, Galaxy Map, and Remote View.

The **Action Screen** follows your main ship, the Player Ship, as it moves around the galaxy. As you approach planets, their names and status (friendly, neutral, or enemy) are displayed on the screen. Note that you can dock **ONLY** on friendly planets. You must first capture neutral or enemy planets before docking is allowed. (You can capture enemy planets only by sending troop ships to them. See TROOP SHIPS.) When you dock on a friendly planet, all docking information will be displayed in the Action Screen as well.

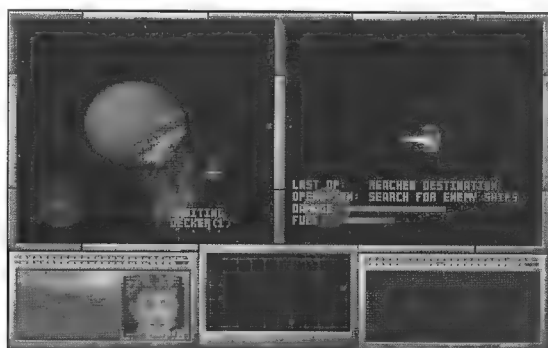
The **Message Screen** will show your first officer reporting back to you from various locations where critical events are taking place. A com-link transmission of your officer will superimpose over an image of the location of the event. Reports include engaging the enemy in battle, capturing an enemy planet or ship, or building a planetary improvement just to name a few. This screen will also show computer information and text messages.

You can toggle between a graphics display and text for the message screen with the F11 and F12 keys.

The **Galaxy Map** shows a magnification of the entire Galaxy that you have chosen. Your Star Cruiser will be shown as well as all the planets. Planets will be color coded to signify ownership. If the planet is neutral, it will be white.

The **Remote View** allows you to watch another ship in your fleet or planet while moving your Star Cruiser. You can set up the Remote View while docked by going to the MAP option and then moving the cross-hairs over the ship or planet you would like to view remotely and pressing the DOCK button.

SPLIT SCREEN MODE



This mode is used when two people are playing at once at the same computer. The screen divides into five sections in this mode. The screen is split left to right so that each player has his own Action Screen and Report Screen. The Galaxy Map remains in the center as before. However, the Remote View screen is lost to players in Split-Screen Mode. You can still watch a remote view of a ship while at the docking screen, but you lose this when you press the FIRE key.

EXPLORING THE GALAXY

NORMAL MODE

As Supreme Ruler of your empire, you control your fleet and manage your resources from your Imperial Star Cruiser. It comes equipped with a beam teleporter to your headquarters.

Any time your ship is destroyed, you will be teleported back to your headquarters where you can board another Star Cruiser. If you do not have the resources available to build another Star Cruiser, you will be unable to act until your planet produces the necessary resources to create a new Star Cruiser.

As you explore the galaxy and aid in military missions, note your damage and fuel bars at the bottom of the view screen. If either completely disappear, your ship will explode. To refuel and/or repair your Star Cruiser, simply move on a friendly planet or link with a Repair/Refuel ship.

In the lower left of your Action Screen, you have a radar display. This will show you nearby friendly and enemy ships.

PHANTOM MODE

In Phantom Mode everything operates the same way with one major exception: your Star Cruiser is replaced by a cursor. You cannot fire or attack with the cursor, but you can move to planets and give orders (and link with ships) as normal.

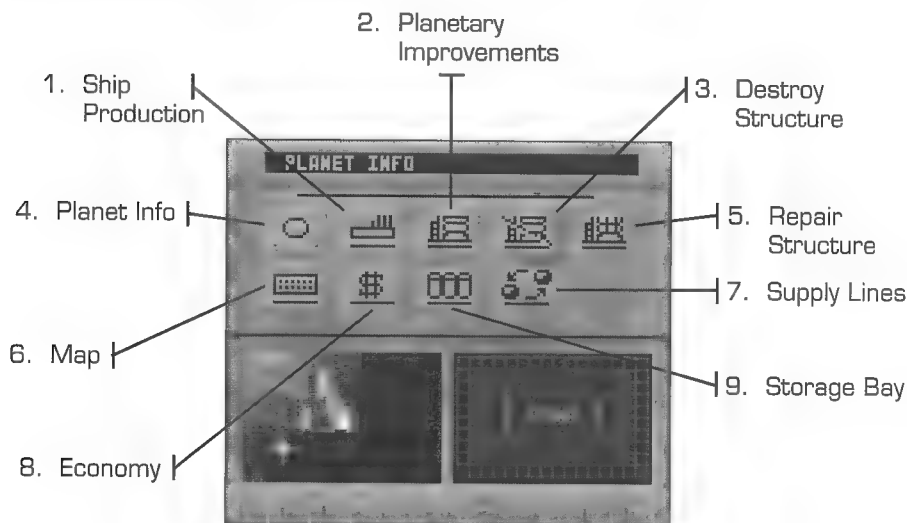
This mode is good for pure strategists who don't want to get mixed up with fast arcade action of your Star Cruiser. You'll lose the ability to aid attacks, but you won't have to worry about ship movement and fuel.

You select "Phantom Mode" from the Player Select Screen.

DOCKING

Docking is your way to command your fleet, manage your resources, and plan your strategies. Of course, your opponents will NOT be stationary while you are docked, so you have to be wary of the time that you spend docked on a planet's surface.

When your Star Cruiser is hovering over a FRIENDLY planet (only), you can dock by pressing the DOCK key. This will take you to a screen where you can further select other game options. These options are explained below.



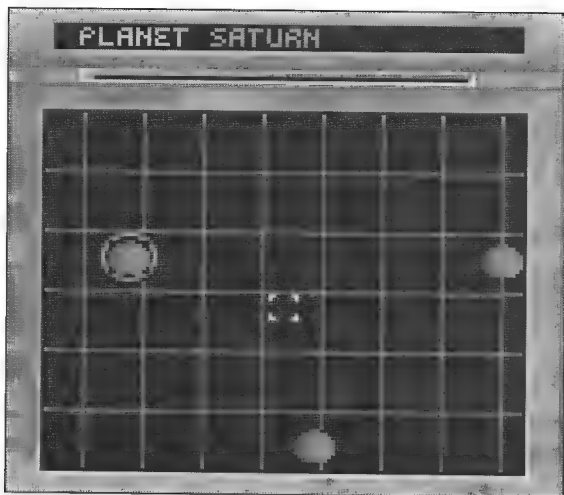
To move around your docking screen, use the arrow keys to move between the various selections. To make a selection press the DOCK key. To back up out of any menu or screen, press the FIRE key. From the main docking screen menu, you can exit back into the game by pressing the FIRE key.

PLANET INFORMATION



When you select Planet Information, you will be able to view the surface of the planet with all of the planet assets and planetary improvements. If any of the planet's structures have been damaged, you will see their current status.

MAP (BATTLE MAP)



Your Battle Map will show you a magnified view of the galaxy. You will be able to move crosshairs around to get further information about friendly planets and starships. You will see enemy and neutral planets, but you will NOT be able to receive any information about them.

Friendly planets and starships will be displayed over your docking screen. If you are playing a one-player game (no split-screen), the planet or ship you have selected will also be shown on the Remote View screen. The Remote View will remain in action until you select another ship or planet to view. Press the FIRE key to exit out of the Battle Map and view screens.



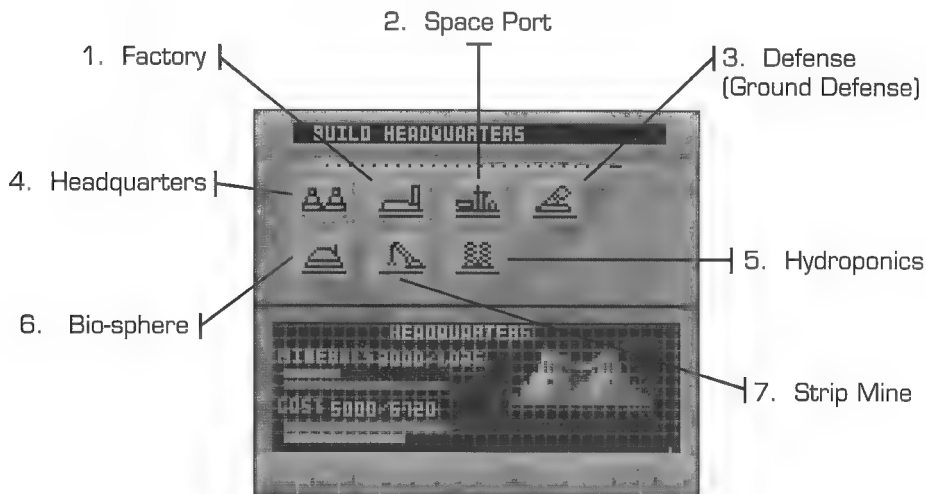
Supply lines are important to your strategy as you move resources from planet to planet. Your options are:

1. **Add New Supply Line** – this will allow you to establish a new outgoing supply line between the planet you are docked on and another friendly planet. Once selected, you will move to another list of icons to select outgoing settlers, minerals, or food.
2. **Delete Supply Line** – this will allow you to delete an outgoing supply line to another planet.
3. **View Outgoing Supplies** – this will show you a diagram of supply lines leaving the planet where you are docked. Blue lines show outgoing settlers (population). Red lines show outgoing minerals. Green lines show outgoing food.
4. **View Incoming Supplies** – this will show you a diagram of incoming supply lines. They are color coded in the same way as the outgoing supply lines.

PLANETARY IMPROVEMENTS

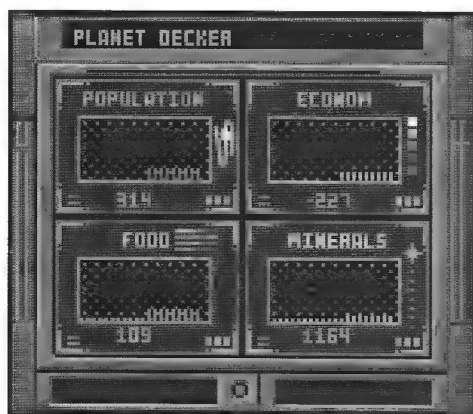
Planetary Improvements are investments in development that enhance the capabilities of a planet. The production of these improvements costs time, money, and mineral resources. Each improvement has cost. A unique ship can not be produced on a planet that is in the process of producing a planetary improvement. Likewise, a planetary improvement can not be produced while a ship is in production.

The planetary improvements that you can make are shown below:



See the section on Planetary Improvements (pg. 49-53) for more detail on each of these.

Costs: Note that every item you can produce shows cost to the left and your current credits to the right on the graph below the icons.



The Planet Economy screen will show you four graphs of how your planetary resources are doing on that planet. The graphs will be updated as you watch:

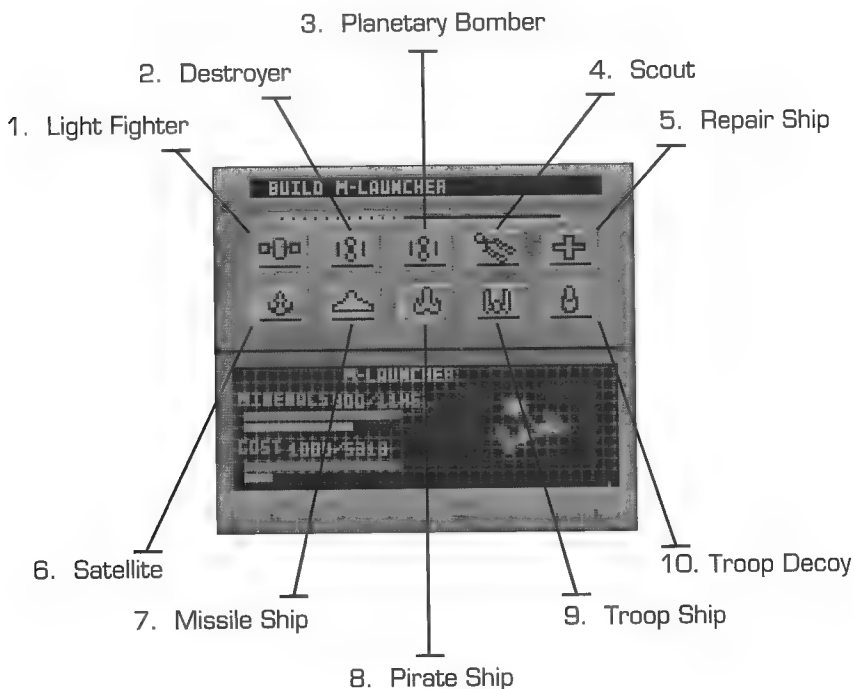
1. **Population** – this will show you a graph of population trends over time.
2. **Minerals** – this will show you a graph of minerals mined from the planet over time.
3. **Food** – this will show you a graph of how much surplus food has been grown on the planet over time.
4. **Credits** – This will show you graphs of how many credits the planet has accumulated or spent over time. (i.e. the net income)

If you click on any of the four graphs you will see a list of friendly planets and graphically how they are doing with that particular resource. Moving left and right will cycle through the four resources while moving up and down will scroll through your friendly planets (if you have more than three). The lower left number shows the production of that resource from the planet you are on, while the number in the lower right gives you your overall production from all planets.

PRODUCTION

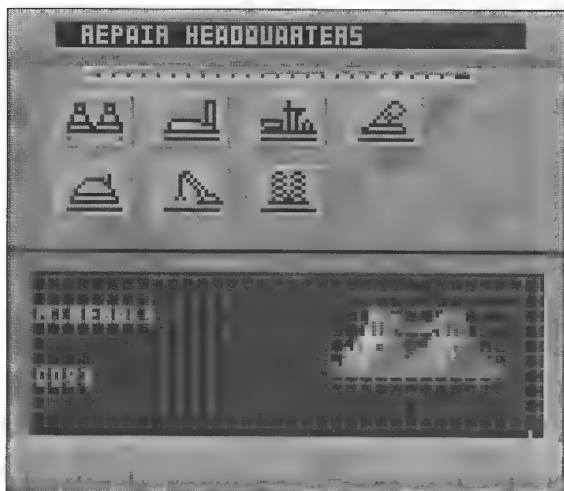
You can build your star ships here in the production part of the docking screen. You will not be able to build a ship if you are currently building a planetary improvement or another ship. You will also need to have the necessary minerals and money to build the various ship types.

The ships you can build are shown below:



For more information about each ship type, please refer to the section of the manual on Ship Types (pg.54-63). Once your ship is built, you will need to give it orders (see SHIP ORDERS pg. 64).

REPAIR STRUCTURE

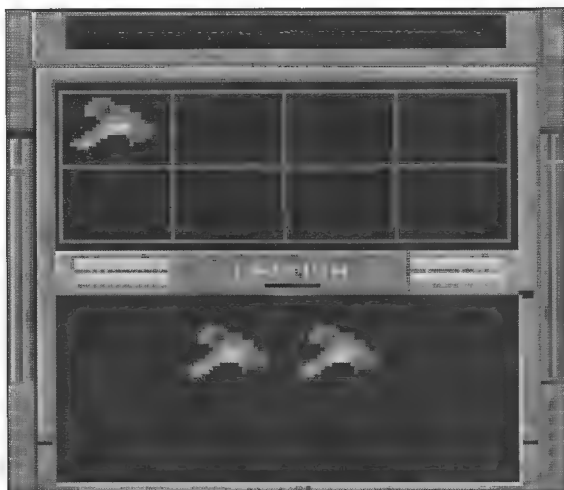


This will allow you to repair a structure that has been damaged from an enemy attack. There is cost and time involved in the structure repairs, but it is less expensive than having to build one from scratch.

You select the icons for the structure you would like to repair in much the same way as you build a new structure. Structures you do not have will be dimmed while ones that need no repairing will be noted as such (since no costs will appear).

Press dock to initiate repairs on a damaged structure.

STORAGE BAY



The Storage bay feature is only accessible on a planet that possesses a space port. The Storage bay icon will be dimmed if there is not an operational one on the planet. From the storage bay, you will be able to store and launch one or more ships immediately from the bay. The top half of your Storage bay screen shows ships in the bay. Selecting them with DOCK will move them to the lower portion. When you select LAUNCH, all ships in the lower portion will be sent out. If you launch more than one ship (up to eight), you have launched a convoy (see Convoys and Storage Bays for more detailed information.)

THE PLANET TYPES

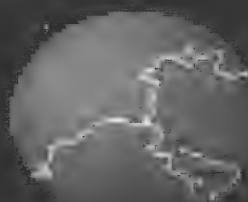
There are six different planet types in the Star Reach™ Galaxy. Planets with hostile environmental conditions must be stabilized by building biospheres and hydroponics plants. This must be done prior to shipping population and/or minerals over by way of supply lines. Minerals cannot be gathered and ships cannot be produced without some sort of planetary population.

VOLCANIC

Minerals: *Very High*

Food: *Very Low*

Inhabitability: *Very Low*



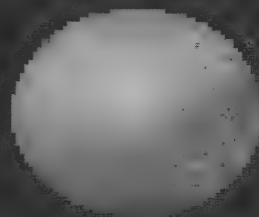
Volcanic Planets are the natural habitats for the Cynod Legion. Minerals abound on Volcanic Planets, but food is hard to find.

DESERT

Minerals: *High*

Food: *Low*

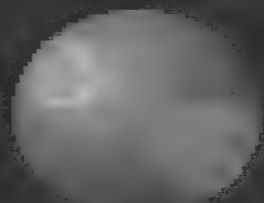
Inhabitability: *Low*



Desert planets are the home planets of the Z'nri. Much like Volcanic planets, Desert planets are also hard to live on, but provide a wealth of minerals.

WATER

Minerals: *Medium*
Food: *Very High*
Inhabitability: *High*



Water planets are very hospitable to all races. Food is also easy to come by on Water planets.

ICE

Minerals: *Medium*
Food: *Medium*
Inhabitability: *Low*



Ice planets are slightly less appealing than Water planets, although much more difficult to live on. Bio-Spheres can be built to make them more hospitable.

MOON

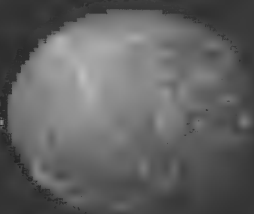
Minerals: *Low*
Food: *Very Low*
Inhabitability: *Very Low*



Moon planets are not very hospitable to any race. They have very little value in game terms except as strategic locations.

EARTH

Minerals: *High*
Food: *High*
Inhabitability: *Very High*



Earth planets are the most attractive targets in the game because they have the greatest wealth of all resources and they are very easy to live on.

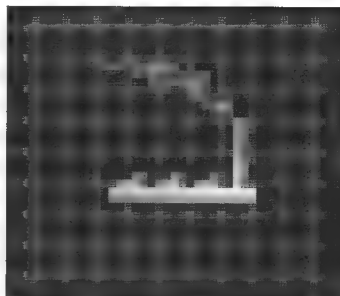
PLANETARY IMPROVEMENTS

FACTORY

Expense: *Medium*

Materials: *Low*

Production Time: *Medium*



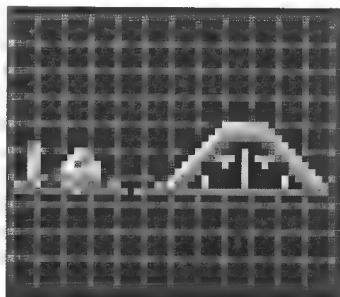
The factory is the most important planetary improvement you can build. It is highly recommended that you build a factory on a planet near your battle front since a planet without a factory is incapable of building ships. Each factory increases the rate of production by one factor.

SPACE PORT

Expense: *Medium*

Materials: *Medium*

Production Time: *High*



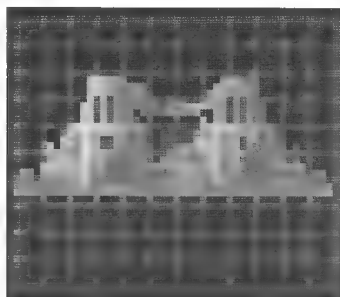
Space ports provide planets with a powerful offensive and defensive weapon by adding the storage bay feature. The storage bay allows you to store ships out of harm's way on the planet for later use and rapid deployment. Storage Bays also allow convoys of up to eight ships to be launched in order to perform designated missions. (See Convoys and Storage Bays.)

HEADQUARTERS

Expense: *High*

Materials: *High*

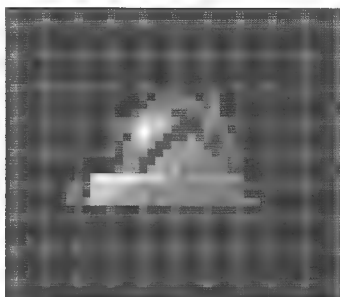
Production Time: *High*



Headquarters designate a planet as the players home base. Remember that when your home base planet is conquered, you lose the game. In addition, this will be the planet that you will return to upon destruction of your Star Cruiser. Headquarters is the most expensive and time consuming planetary improvement. By building a headquarters on a planet, the host planet becomes your home base and your old headquarters is removed.

BIO-SPHERE

Expense:	<i>Low</i>
Materials:	<i>Medium</i>
Production Time:	<i>Medium</i>

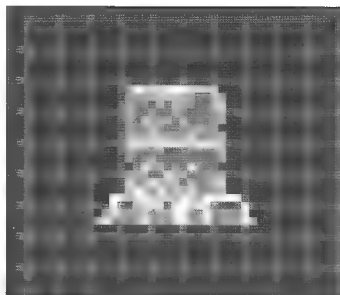


Bio-Spheric Domes provide protection from the elements allowing for the population to grow. Larger populations result in more rapid troop enlistment. A maximum of four Bio-Spheric Domes may be purchased for each planet. Each planet type has a built-in maximum population. Building Bio-spheres will increase that maximum, making a greater maximum population.

Note that moon and volcanic planets start with a maximum population of 0 (zero), so Bio-spheres are a must if you want people to live there.

HYDROPONICS PLANT

Expense:	<i>Low</i>
Materials:	<i>Medium</i>
Production Time:	<i>Medium</i>



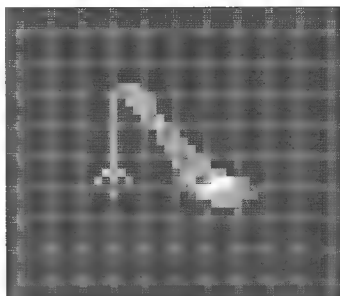
Hydroponics plants increase the food production rate of the host planet. Increased food production is necessary to both increase and maintain large planetary populations. Hydroponics plants are most useful on planets with low food production such as the moon and volcanic planets where initial food ceilings are at zero. Earth and water planets have much higher food ceilings, but can increase them to even higher values with more Hydroponics plants. Planetary food is measured by food surplus, and more Hydroponics plants can give you bonuses to increase your food surplus. Greater food production can also increase the rate of population growth. A maximum of four hydroponics plants may be purchased for each planet.

STRIP MINES

Expense: *Low*

Materials: *Low*

Production Time: *Low*



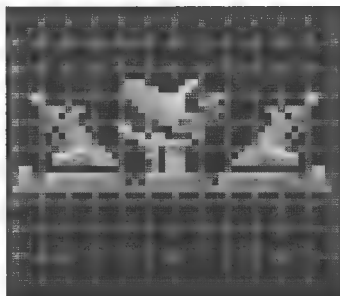
Strip mines increase the rate at which a planet can gather mineral resources. A maximum of four strip mines may be purchased for each planet. Minerals are important for production of ships and planetary improvements, and for repairs. Minerals also determine the planet's economy (cash) along with population.

GROUND DEFENSE

Expense: *High*

Materials: *High*

Production Time: *Medium*



Ground Defense increases the host planet's resistance to enemy troop invasion. Enemy troop ships will have a more difficult time landing on the surface of a planet with a ground defense. Ground defense will destroy about one out of three enemy ships trying to land. Only one ground defense system is allowed per planet.

THE SHIP TYPES

LIGHT FIGHTERS

Fire Power: *Medium*

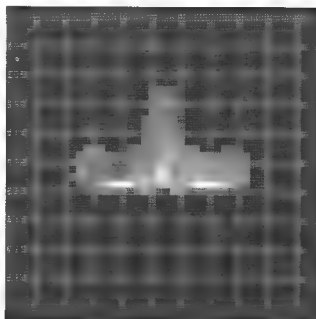
Armor: *Light*

Fuel Capacity: *Medium*

Cost: *Low*

Mineral Units: *Low*

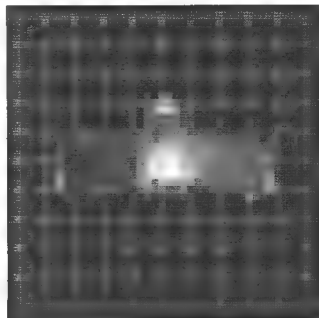
Production Time: *Low*



Light fighters are all-purpose combat units. They can be used to destroy an enemy's satellite defense system, sent on patrols to provide reconnaissance and early defense, or sent on convoys escorting weaker ships to help ensure the success of a mission. Light Fighters cannot take over enemy planets, but they are able to pave the way for Troop Carriers to launch a ground attack.

DESTROYERS

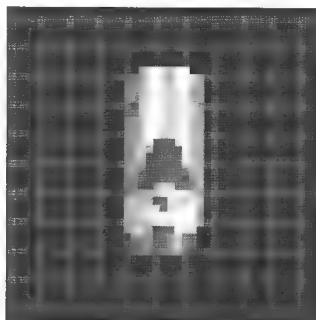
Fire Power:	<i>Heavy</i>
Armor:	<i>Heavy</i>
Fuel Capacity:	<i>Large</i>
Cost:	<i>Medium</i>
Mineral Units:	<i>High</i>
Production Time:	<i>High</i>



Destroyers, like light fighters, are versatile attack and defense units. These ships are heavily armored, with strong fire power. They supercede light fighters in all aspects. Of course, they are considerably more expensive.

PLANETARY BOMBERS

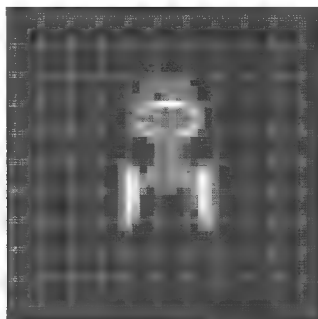
Fire Power:	<i>Special</i>
Armor:	<i>Heavy</i>
Fuel Capacity:	<i>Large</i>
Cost:	<i>Medium</i>
Mineral Units:	<i>Medium</i>
Production Time:	<i>Medium</i>



Planetary Bombers are single minded ships with only one purpose: to devastate the surface of a planet with long range attacks. To this end, these ships maintain an awesome array of firepower which will rain down on their target planet from an orbit in space. Although these ships have the most powerful artillery of the ships in the game, they are quite useless defensively because they are not able to shoot at enemy ships. If they are to succeed in planetary attacks, they are best served by an escort of light fighters and destroyers to protect them.

SCOUT SHIPS

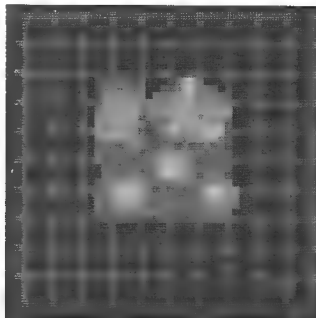
Fire Power:	<i>None</i>
Armor:	<i>Light</i>
Fuel Capacity:	<i>Large</i>
Cost:	<i>Low</i>
Mineral Units:	<i>Low</i>
Production Time:	<i>Medium</i>



Scout ships are used to spy out enemy positions. Whenever they encounter an enemy ship or planet, that ship or planet will then appear on your Battle Map. Scout ships can also help reveal planetary structures on unfriendly planets. From your Battle Map, if a scout ship nears an unfriendly planet, you can select it and view the planet's surface.

REPAIR SHIPS

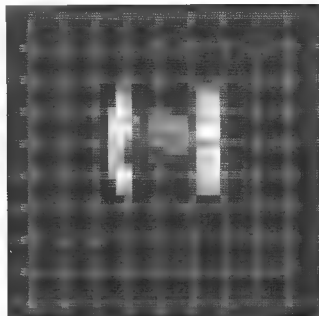
Fire Power:	<i>None</i>
Armor:	<i>Light</i>
Fuel Capacity:	<i>Auto-refuel</i>
Cost:	<i>Medium</i>
Mineral Units:	<i>High</i>
Production Time:	<i>High</i>



Repair ships are maintenance units with no offensive or defensive capability. They patrol in search of ships that are either low in fuel or high in damage. Once they have targeted a ship for repair (or refuel), they link to the ship and perform the necessary repairs or restocking. Repair ships are vulnerable and are most effective far away from heated battles, or accompanied by a convoy or light fighters and destroyers. You may also dock with your main ship and your main ship will be refueled and repaired

SATELLITES

Fire Power:	<i>Light</i>
Armor:	<i>Light</i>
Fuel Capacity:	<i>N/A</i>
Cost:	<i>Medium</i>
Mineral Units:	<i>High</i>
Production Time:	<i>Medium</i>



Satellites are a planet's primary defense system. Each planet may have up to four orbiting satellites. Satellites target enemy ships that come near the planet and then fire laser bursts at the enemy. Although satellites are lightly armored, they are small and orbit planets quickly, making them a difficult target, and a powerful weapon.

MISSILE SHIPS

Fire Power: *Special*

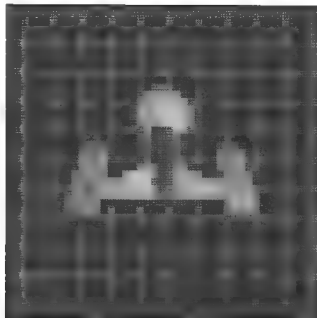
Armor: *Medium*

Fuel Capacity: *Medium*

Cost: *High*

Mineral Units: *High*

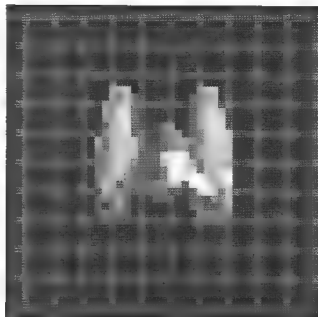
Production Time: *Medium*



Missile ships will send a guided missile toward an enemy Star Cruiser or planetary bomber when in range. The missile will continue to chase the enemy ship until the missile runs out of fuel or impacts on the enemy ship. They have no other weapons and are quite vulnerable to destroyers and light fighters.

PIRATE SHIPS

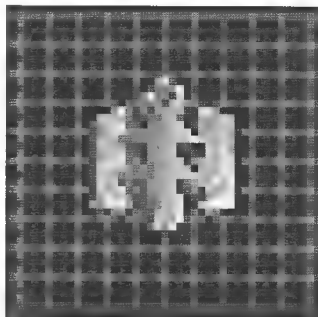
Fire Power:	<i>Light</i>
Armor:	<i>Medium</i>
Fuel Capacity:	<i>Large</i>
Cost:	<i>High</i>
Mineral Units:	<i>Medium</i>
Production Time:	<i>Low</i>



Pirate ships will travel through the galaxy looking for enemy supply ships or ships that are stranded in space due to damage or lack of fuel. When they find a suitable target, they will attempt to capture it by linking up with it and putting it into your supply lines or sending it to a friendly storage bay.

TROOP SHIPS

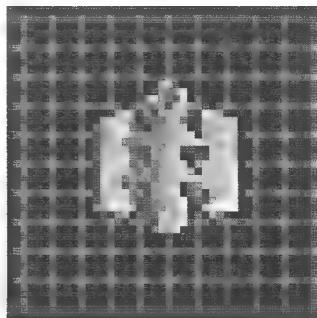
Fire Power:	<i>None</i>
Armor:	<i>Medium</i>
Fuel Capacity:	<i>Medium</i>
Cost:	<i>Low</i>
Mineral Units:	<i>Medium</i>
Production Time:	<i>Low</i>



Troop ships are your only way to capture enemy or neutral planets. Unfortunately, they have no defensive ability so they may need to be protected if sent out to capture a planet. Each ship carries ONE troop unit.

TROOP DECOYS

Fire Power:	<i>None</i>
Armor:	<i>Medium</i>
Fuel Capacity:	<i>Medium</i>
Cost:	<i>Low</i>
Mineral Units:	<i>Medium</i>
Production Time:	<i>Low</i>



Troop decoys are dummy ships that look exactly like your Troop Ships but carry no troops. Because they carry no weapons or troops, they are very easy to produce.

SHIP ORDERS

PATROL

The "Patrol" order allows you to send a ship along a desired path. The ship will continue its patrol until it is destroyed or you change its orders via the ship-to-ship link. After clicking on the "Patrol" button, the screen will switch to the Battle Map. Move the cursor to the first point of the desired patrol and click the DOCK key. The first point in the path has now been set. Moving the cursor to a new position and pressing the DOCK key will set the next point in the path. You may continue adding points to the ships path (to a maximum of 4) as desired. If at any point you wish to complete the patrol, press the DOCK key twice on the final location. This allows you to set patrols from anywhere between one and four points.

TO PLANET

The "To Planet" order allows you to send ships to another friendly planet where it will attempt to land. Use the DOCK key to select its destination.



SEND TO STORAGE BAY

The Storage Bay command is only available if you possess a Space Port. By choosing the "Send to Storage Bay" command, you can store the ship in the Storage Bay for later use. Up to eight ships can be stored in the Storage Bay at once. The Storage Bay is useful in creating large convoys. See The Storage Bay section for more information on creating convoys.

TO OTHER PLANET'S STORAGE BAY

This command allows you to send ships to other planets' storage bays for later use. You may only send the ship to a friendly planet that has a Storage Bay. This command is useful when sending ships from productive planets in the back to less productive planets on the front line.

SEND TO DESTINATION

Sending a ship to a destination will move the ship to that destination where it will patrol its immediate surroundings and await further orders.

CONVOYS

ESCORT AND RETURN:

Any ships that remain at the conclusion of the mission will return to the storage bay.

ESCORT AND REMAIN:

Any ships that remain at the conclusion of the mission will stay by the planet.

ESCORT AND DISPERSE:

Any ships that remain at the conclusion of the mission will disperse in random directions and patrol.

For more information on convoys, see pg. 71

SHIP-TO-SHIP LINK

The ship-to-ship link feature provides you with a means to redirect ships that are currently acting on previous orders. You can initiate a ship-to-ship link by flying near the ship that you would like to link to and pressing and holding down the dock key. You will see a tractor beam line drawn from your player ship to the combat unit that you are attempting to link to. Holding down the dock key pulls the combat unit closer to your player ship until a link is established. Linking in Phantom Mode works similarly but you will not see a tractor beam. Move the cursor to the ship you want to link with and press DOCK when the highlighted box appears over the ship.

BUT THERE'S JUST TOO MANY OF THEM!

If multiple combat units are in the same area, your tractor beam will lock on the nearest ship. By pressing and releasing the dock key repeatedly the tractor beam will cycle through the other combat units in the vicinity. Once the beam is attached to the ship that you would like to link to, holding down the dock key will draw the ship close to you until a link is established.

Once a link is established, you can reorder the ship. If you link to a Repair/Refuel ship, it will immediately begin repairing and refueling your Star Cruiser. You can also use the link feature to tow ships behind you. Since your Star Cruiser moves faster than any other ship in the game, you can begin to link with a ship and pull it behind you until you reach your destination.

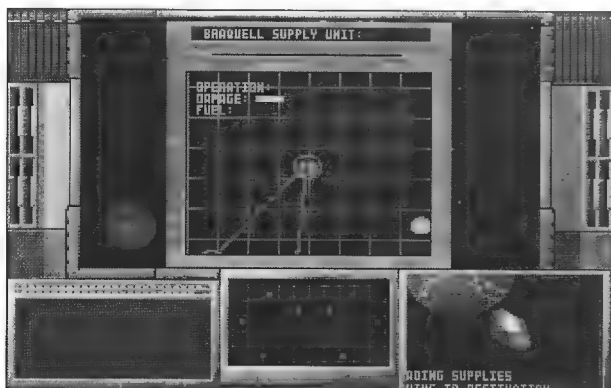
TO LINK OR NOT TO LINK:

Each combat unit is valuable so it is important to use this function to check on their status and redirect their commands if need be. For instance, the course of battle, ships may become stranded performing orders that are no longer useful, thus needing redirection.

SUPPLY SHIPS AND SUPPLY LINES

You control your economy through supply ships and supply lines. To maintain production levels on the planet(s) you are producing ships on, you will need to have enough resources. You can keep a healthy number of resources on your planets by establishing supply lines between your planets that have an abundance of certain resources with planets that lack that resource.

From the DOCKING screen you can select outgoing supply lines of population (colonists), food, and minerals.

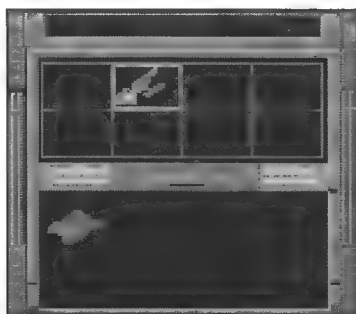


STORAGE BAYS AND CONVOYS

Storage Bays and Convoys provide a much more advanced way of controlling your fleet. A well-structured convoy can be quite a formidable force. While beginning players should concentrate on other aspects of the game at first, mastering the use of storage bays and convoys will greatly increase your power.

STORAGE BAYS

Only planets with a Spaceport have storage bays. When you select your storage bay from the DOCKING screen, you will move to a special screen where you can control the ships in the storage bay.



The storage bay screen is divided in two. The top of the screen displays the ships that are currently in the storage bay. The bottom of the screen is the launch display which displays the ships that have been selected for launching. The movement keys control the red selection square. Placing this square over a stored ship and pressing the DOCK key moves the ship icon to the launch display. Similarly placing the selection square over a ship in the launch display and pressing the DOCK key moves the ship back to the storage display. Once the desired ships are placed in the launch display, select the "launch" button in the center of the screen and press the

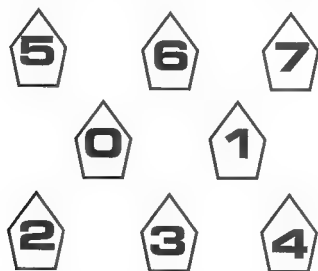
DOCK key. If more than one ship is selected for launching, you have selected a convoy. When launching a convoy, your choice of ship orders are limited to the orders that ALL of the ships in the convoy are capable of.

Due to the fact that ships in the storage bay have been previously produced, launching ships from the storage bay occurs immediately. Pressing the **FIRE** key during the storage bay selection screen will return you to the top menu layer keeping the selected ships in the storage bay.

CONVOY THEORY

Convoys have been designed with a balance of simplicity and maximum flexibility in mind. In order to keep the implementation of convoys both rapid and intuitive, some flexibility has had to be sacrificed. The rules are as follows:

A convoy may be composed of up to 8 ships, and no fewer than 2 ships.



Convoys are arranged such that the convoy leader is always in the 0 slot. When a number of ships are chosen to compose a convoy, the positioning of the ships is automatically arranged by the ship types. Troop ships take top priority for the 0 slot with Bomber ships taking the next priority slot. Both fighters and destroyers will try to fill the 5,6,and 7 slots first, the 2,3,4 slots

next, and lastly the 0 and 1 slots. In this way, your combat ships will naturally try to protect your non-combat ships (or ships with little defense). You will note that destroyers in a convoy will break away to engage an approaching enemy and then rejoin the convoy after the enemy threat has been destroyed.

CONVOYS

Convoys are formed when you select LAUNCH from a planet's storage bay and more than one ship has been selected.

Convoys automatically form around a convoy leader. In a group of ships selected to form a convoy, the leader is generally the weakest and most critical ship, the best example being a troop ship.

The order in which ships are most likely to lead is as follows:

- 1) Troop Ship
- 2) Bomber Ship
- 3) Missile Launcher
- 4) Repair Ship
- 5) Pirate Ship
- 6) Scout Ship
- 7) Light Fighter
- 8) Destroyer
- 9) Decoys

The orders that a convoy may be given depends primarily upon the convoy leader. As an example, a convoy that contains a troop ship leader will have the option to move to a destination enemy planet, while a convoy that is lead by a repair ship will not.

Additionally there are 3 special convoy commands that are available in certain conditions. When a mission-critical ship such as a troop ship or a bomber ship is sent out in a convoy with any other types of ships, the other ships are considered to be the escort for the convoy leader. As such there are 3 escort commands.

- 1) **Escort and return:** Once the leader achieves his mission, the escort ships return back to their home planet and reenter the storage bay.
- 2) **Escort and disperse:** Once the leader has achieved his mission, the escort ships dissolve the convoy and disperse in a fairly large radius around the planet that was their destination.
- 3) **Escort and remain:** Once the mission is accomplished, the convoy chooses a new leader from among the escort ships and remains in the area as a convoy.



ON DEATH AND DYING

While it is true that there is no limitation on the number of Star Cruisers that the player will be allotted, every time a Star Cruiser is created it will cost you money and minerals. If you happen to be in the unfortunate situation of losing a ship while having a zero balance of available credits, the production of the new player ship will be delayed. This is the only penalty; in no circumstance will you have a negative balance. Losing Star Cruisers WILL NOT directly cause you to lose the game.

CREDITS AND SPENDING WISELY

Credits (or currency units) in the game are accrued through resource management. You gain credits on each planet for a combination of both minerals and population on a planet.

If you are not careful with your spending, you will run out of credits and not be able to build anything (including Star Cruisers) for a while until the credits build up again.

If you find yourself frequently running out of credits, watch your economy screen closely. Use supply lines to get resources you are lacking, and try to maintain constant population growth.

OUTWITTING YOUR OPPONENTS ON THE BATTLEFIELD

PLANETS AS STRATEGIC POINTS

Due to the fact that player ships can not travel very far without stopping to refuel, it is essential to move through enemy territory by invading a planet at a time. Additionally, the more planets that a player owns, the more resources that player is able to accumulate. A typical sequence would be for a player to invade a planet, fortify the planet, establish a supply route to the planet, and move troops and weaponry from the planets behind the battle lines to the foreground planet.

BATTLE MANEUVERING

When moving your ships in battle, try to keep your strongest ships in position to protect your weaker ones. If you move a repair ship in, be quick to link up with the ships that have the most damage. How you maneuver your repair ships in battle can be the difference between victory and defeat.

DEFENDING PLANETS

The easiest way to defend a planet is to build satellites. These front line defense systems orbit the planet and target any enemy object that moves (*HINT*: this includes guided missiles that may be chasing your player ship). However, this is not a complete solution. Building planetary defense systems and simply maintaining a large number of troops on the planet will keep a planet well fortified against invasion.

PRODUCTION STRATEGIES

Maximizing the use of available resources is one of the keys to launching a successful campaign. None of your planets should sit idly while the others bear the brunt of the battle. Planets that are well behind your front lines should produce the bulk of the offensive weapons, while the planets on the front line should produce defensive weapons, protecting themselves from hostile takeover.

MAKING THE BEST OF STORAGE BAYS

Storage bays are an important element of any offensive strategy. A storage bay allows for safe storage of ships that are not immediately needed. Additionally, storage bays add the functionality of the convoy feature, which allows the player to send groups of ships on missions together with orders not normally available to individual launches.

KEEPING AN EYE ON THE ENEMY

Depending on how many players are participating in the campaign that you are playing, there will be anywhere from 1-3 colored balls on the edge of your view screen. These balls point to the direction of the other player of the same color. The intensity of these balls will indicate proximity of the associated player, with the brightest intensity indicating the closest player.

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE REMOTE VIEW SCREEN (1-PLAYER)

After placing a remote view on a ship or a planet while playing in 1 player, full-screen mode, the chosen object will remain in view in the lower right hand area of the screen. This is most useful for watching a critical planet for early signs of an attack, or watching a mission-critical ship such as a troop ship or bomber, to see if they have been able to fulfill their mission.

KEEPING AN EYE ON CRITICAL BATTLES

Use the remote view to keep watch on planets that are near the front of your lines or that you know your enemy will target. Keeping an eye on these planets can help warn you if danger approaches.

RUNNING A TIGHT SHIP

Occasionally ships that you have ordered have either fulfilled their mission or outlived their usefulness. You can then either link up to these ships using the ship-to-ship link feature (See section on ship-to-ship), and redirect them to a new command, or use the scrap directive and send them to a specified planet to reassimilate into the planetary resources (the minerals, etc. are salvaged from the ship). It is often a good idea to redirect a ship to enter a planet's storage bay so that it will be out of harm's way until you are ready to use it, or remain available for use in a convoy.

NOTES ON THE GROUND ATTACK

Once a troop ship reaches an enemy planet, the ship will disappear into a portal that transports the ship to the target planet's surface. The battle that commences on the planet's surface is straightforward mutual annihilation. A single attacking troop unit can defeat a single defending troop unit. Both units are lost in the battle.

CAPTURING PLANETS

Troop ships are the only ships that can conquer an enemy planet. If a troop ship is fortunate enough to reach an enemy planet intact, the troops still need to contend with whatever ground forces (enemy troop units) that the planet possesses. Bomber ships can bombard a planet from space, potentially destroying defense structures on the ground to pave the way for the troop ships.

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